A BASIC GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL FAMILY TENT CAMPING

by 149

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B. S., Kansas State University, 1959

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Physical Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1967

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades, automation has swept throughout our nation. The American people have more leisure time on their hands than ever before in history. Looking into the future, there is an indication that the work week will edge toward thirty hours, increasing the present amount of leisure time.[1] With such a prediction staring recreation experts in the face, the challenge to educate for the worthy use of leisure time looms even greater. This challenge can only be met when this time is filled with recreational activities which draw a family together. In many instances, recreation spreads the family apart into diverse directions. The amount of time which a family spends together as a unit becomes minimal. As a result, broken homes have flourished with the rising divorce rate; and juvenile delinquency has reached an all-time high. It is the author's firm belief that "a family that plays together stays together." Recreation which encompasses the entire family strengthens the bond between Mother and Father and occupies Junior in wholesome activity. Such recreation can be found in camping.

History of Camping. Actually, camping is not a new way of living. It is often referred to as being as old as man himself. No doubt, it is the earliest form of living of the human race. Prehistoric man was a perpetual camper using the caves for his dwelling and whatever food was nearby for his nourishment. He was exposed to the elements, but by

[1] Outdoor Recreation for America, A Report to the President and to the Congress, (Washington, D. C., January, 1962), p. 22.

matching his brain against physical force, he was able to survive. When he was cold, he remembered the forest fire, and built the first campfire. Prehistoric living became a forerunner of modern camplife.[2]

During the Neolithic period, which existed before 7000 B.C., the first settled communities were not housed in villages but rather in permanent camps. The tents were then made of skin.[3] As time passed, living became more and more nomadic depending on the availability of food. It aptly fit the definition of camping—"temporary outdoor living."[4]

During Bible times, camplife existed for many peoples. The Israelites literally camped for forty years in the wilderness. Other Asian peoples have always lived in small tents. These tents displayed their rank and riches by marks and symbols placed upon them.[5]

Our present concept of camping, though, is most directly related to the life of the American Indian. The Indians obtained food, clothing, and shelter directly from nature using highly developed outdoor skills. Along with this, they had an aesthetic sense of appreciation of the outdoors.[6]

Thus, the human race has lived in camp situations for hundreds of thousands of years. Our modern indoor mode of life is only a few centuries old. The urge to be outdoors and to camp is thought by some to be a biological characteristic of man.[7]

[2]Hendrik Van Loon, The Story of Mankind, (United States: Boni and Liverwright, Inc., 1921), p. 14.

[3]Richard Carrington, A Million Years of Man, (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1963), p. 169.

[4]"Camping," Collier's Encyclopedia, V, p. 229.

[5]"Tents," The World Book Encyclopedia, XVIII, p. 134.

[6]Collier's Encyclopedia, p. 230

[7]Ibid.

Before 1880, seventy-five per cent of the population in the United States were farmers or pioneers whose children received most of their training through blazing trails, clearing the land, killing game, picking fruit and vegetables, and other activities closely associated with camp-life. By the turn of the twentieth century, the United States was changing from a rural to an urban nation. More than half of the nation's people lived in cities of eight thousand or more. A generation began growing up which did not know the outdoors. This caused many schools and colleges to establish agricultural colleges to make farm life appear more attractive. A back-to-nature movement began to take full swing. In the midst of this movement evolved camping for recreation.[8]

Present Status of Camping. Camping as recreation has become one of the fastest-growing leisure time activities in the United States. In the last twenty years, the nation's population has increased by thirty-six per cent, but the number of campers has increased two hundred per cent. During 1966, forty-three million mothers, fathers, and children went camping.[9] This is a remarkable figure when one considers that it was not too many years ago that camping was looked upon as an adventure for only the hardy individual. Even today, many people still think of a family camping trip as a vacation in discomfort.[10]

[8]"Camping," Encyclopedia Britannica, IV, p. 681.

[9]Ernest F. Schmidt, "Guide to Family Camping," American Camping Association, (Martinsville, Indiana: American Camping Association Publications, 1965), p. 1.

[10]Editors of Sunset Books, Sunset Family Camping, (Menlo Park, California: Lane Book Company, 1962), p. 8.

These conservative attitudes concerning camping are changing today at a tremendous rate. Probably the most influential reason behind this change is that campers are finding camp life to be very enjoyable. They have discovered it is pleasant to be out where Mother Nature is one's neighbor. In our urban and congested mode of life, such a neighbor becomes a natural tranquilizer.[11]

Another reason behind camping's growing popularity is that it is basically quite economical. A family vacation involving restaurants and motels often becomes quite expensive. Necessary camp equipment is also an expense, but the initial cost of good equipment for a family of four needs not exceed two-hundred-fifty to three hundred dollars. This is comparable to the expense of a two week vacation for an identical family which uses commercial eating and sleeping facilities. However, camping equipment (adequately cared for) should last for many years of vacations. This offsets the initial cost.[12]

More people are enjoying camping today than ever before because of an increase in the production and availability of camp equipment. Such equipment can now provide conveniences which in many instances can equal those back home. This equipment is safer, handier, and easier to use than ever before. And it can be purchased more easily.[13]

Camping is popular because it provides the opportunity to more adequately view America by the individual family at its own rate of

[11] Ibid.

[12] John Jobson, "The Complete Camper," Sports Afield, (May, 1967), p. 62.

[13] Outdoor Recreation for America, p. 22.

speed. A motel vacationer tends to limit himself because he goes on more traveled roads. A camping vacationer seeks the more scenic, remote areas in a less-hurried manner. Traveling without deadlines gives a family a more relaxed vacation. Commercial advertising for camping stresses this point, and helps make all aspects of camp life appear very enticing.

The increase in camping is also attributed to the fact that more and more public funds are continually being used to establish new campgrounds, and to improve old ones. Roads which lead to camping areas have been greatly improved. Developments in the automobile have helped induce many families to look forward to travel. As a result, many more people are taking to the road.[15]

Statement of the Problem. Contrary to much of our country, South Dakota is relatively remote, sparsely populated, and nurtures thousands of acres of virgin land. Near Pierre, the capital of South Dakota in the central part of the state, there is a large lake known as Lake Oahe. This lake is nationally known among sportsmen for its fine fishing, and yet there are coves on it which have never been fished. Such coves are devoid of an access to commercial travel or facilities. This makes tent camping the only feasible way to reach and temporarily stay there.

On the other hand, South Dakota has successfully established many new and ultra-modern campsites to promote family camping. These have been made available because recreation experts and government personnel agree that family camping is a most worthwhile activity. With adequate facilities, more and more South Dakotans are taking to the road for a camping

[15] Ibid.

vacation. Campers from other parts of the country are likewise coming to South Dakota to dodge congested vacations. Of these thousands, many are camping for the first time. Some are skeptics who are not convinced they will enjoy camping. They are poorly prepared for the days ahead of them.

Statement of Purpose. Successful camping includes adequate planning, organization, know-how, and an appreciation of nature. The objectives and purposes of family camping have been well-stated by the Inter-Agency Council for Recreation in Michigan. The author believes that such objectives should be learned by all dedicated, successful campers. Family camping should:

1. Provide a rich experience in family living on a twenty-four hour per day basis, different from the usual daily routine where a variety of obligations and interests tend to separate the family.
2. Provide a cooperative family experience.
3. Provide for healthful and wholesome living experiences.
4. Provide for other wholesome human relationships with other campers, developing friendliness and neighborliness.
5. Provide an opportunity for a comparatively inexpensive and economical vacation not otherwise possible.
6. Provide for learning experiences of all kinds; the out-of-doors, historical, social, and economic facts.
7. Develop a variety of appreciations; for the land, the State, the beauty of nature and natural resources, other humans, and plant and animal life.
8. Provide the opportunity to enrich life by the potential of development of hobbies and interests.
9. Provide the experiences of romantic adventure and discovery, not available in any other setting.
10. Provide contact with past economies of other industries—lumbering, mining, quarrying—and the culture of the people comprising those earlier societies.
11. Provide numerous occasions for creativeness in the improvisations often necessary.[16]

[16] Ernest V. Blohm and Thomas C. Slaughter, "Objectives and Purposes of Family Camping," (Michigan: Inter-Agency Council for Recreation, March, 1961), p. 1. (Mimeographed)

These objectives will be incorporated into a workshop on family tent camping which the author wishes to conduct during the summer session, 1968, at Yankton College, Yankton, South Dakota. The material in this report will be used as a guide in this workshop for novice campers as well as those campers who need additional information. A workshop of this nature should be well-received in this particular area because South Dakota lacks many of the fine facilities for lodging and eating which have already been established in other parts of the country.

It is the author's purpose that any person coming into contact with this report and subsequently the workshop will be able to look forward to a family vacation of camping. He should be adequately prepared with proper equipment, the knowledge of how to use and care for it, and the complete enjoyment of a family vacation. For this reason, this basic guide to family tent camping is being written.

Definition of Terms Used.

Camping. Camping is the term used for temporary outdoor living.

Packaged Deal. In this report, a packaged deal refers to several pieces of camping equipment which an individual may purchase together at one price. Purchasing in this manner will save the shopper hours of looking around, but many times an inferior item is included with other quality equipment.

Pitching a Tent. Pitching a tent means erecting or setting up a tent so that it is ready for use.

Striking a Tent. Striking a tent refers to taking it down. When it is down, the statement is made that "it has been struck."

Ridge. The ridge is the uppermost part of the tent, its apex.

Dry Finish. A dry finish is a type of water repellent processing commonly used on modern tents. It consists of minerals which are added to the tent material. When they become moist for the first time, they form a lasting water repellent.

Guy Ropes. Guy ropes hold the tent in position once it has been pitched. The ropes are fastened to the tent and are anchored by tent stakes.

Canopy. A canopy is a piece of tent cloth which is erected above the door of the tent to give shade and allow the opening to remain open during rainy spells. Canopies may also be erected for shelter or for shade while eating.

Tarpaulin. A tarpaulin refers to a large piece of material which is similar to the fabric from which a tent is made. It can be used as a ground cloth, for added shelter, as a windbreak, and for packing gear for the road.

Sleeping Gear. Sleeping gear refers to the equipment necessary for comfortable sleeping (air mattress, pillow, sleeping bag, blankets, and cot).

Air Mattress. An air mattress is a piece of equipment which can be inflated and then used for lying upon. It is very comfortable.

Cot. This is a type of bed which folds. It consists of a simple frame and strong material. A cot is very popular with campers who do not like to sleep on the ground.

Mummy Bag. A mummy bag is a type of sleeping bag which fits the contours of the body. The name is derived from the Egyptian mummy that was wrapped in cloth.

Campsite. A campsite is the area in which camp is established.

Review of the Resource Material. During the past two years, the author has spent many hours reading camping articles and manuals. He did this for his own use and enjoyment. As time passed and discussions were held with other individuals and families, he became acutely aware of the need for practical instruction in camping. It was at this time that the decision was made to offer a workshop in family tent camping, and specific material was gathered.

The resource materials used in the writing of this report were obtained through the Yankton College Library, the Yankton Municipal Library, the Library of Congress, by special request to numerous companies and recreation departments throughout the United States and Canada, and from personal collections of camping magazines and articles.

Much of the data is undocumented because the author is writing as an experienced camper. He has first-hand experience in buying equipment, planning a trip, living at camp, storing camp gear, and then looking forward to the next outing. Furthermore, the enjoyment of camp relaxation plus real family togetherness has been a personal experience.

It should be stressed that camping books and articles contain basically the same information. There is much repetition from author to author. Camping is composed of basic knowledge void of controversy, and therefore is a subject on which extensive resource materials become superfluous.

CHAPTER II

BASIC CAMPING EQUIPMENT

When a novice camper begins to purchase equipment, he may be overwhelmed by the great variety, range, and unending choice. The variation in cost is also rather large. Because of these factors, most authorities recommend that on the first camping trip, one should rent or borrow as much camping gear as possible. This gear should be used and checked to see if it will fill the camper's needs. In other words, it is recommended that a beginning camper buys the minimum amount of equipment before the first trip. Later, he will better know what is best for his particular needs.

Many camp equipment dealers now have "the package deal," but one must be most careful in such instances. Some poor quality item may be placed in such a deal along with the better quality items. In order to know what good equipment is, a new camper should be fully aware of all phases of his new adventure. He should study and read all he can about camping. Books, magazines, brochures, and manuals concerning camping can be obtained at any newstand, bookstore, library, or state park association.

A family's camping gear should be assembled with three points in mind: (1) size of the family, (2) kind of camping the family plans to do, (3) the budget.[1]

The amount of gear which should be purchased depends on how the family will travel. It makes a difference if travel is to be by car, truck, bus, train, cycle, or on foot.

[1]The Editors of Better Homes and Gardens, Family Camping, (United States: Meredith Publishing Company, 1961), p. 23.

C. B. Colby, an authority on camping who edits the camping section in Outdoor Life, recommends that campers buy the best possible equipment. The time of need, miles from any shopping facility, is a poor time to discover that one has shoddy equipment. Mr. Colby also stresses that for less than three hundred dollars, a family of four can be well-equipped with every basic item for comfortable, even luxurious camping.[2] Once again the old statement is true, "You get exactly what you pay for." With this is mind, the information in this paper will concern good to high quality merchandise.

Basically, the needs while camping stem from requirements for shelter and protection from the weather, a warm and comfortable bed, equipment for food preparation, and proper clothing. These needs can be supplemented by miscellaneous articles necessary to set up a temporary home in the out-of-doors, plus those needed for recreation and individual relaxation.[3]

The first step in gathering camping equipment is to make a list of items needed and then sort it into categories such as shelter, clothing, sleeping gear, eating items, and recreation-relaxation articles. The author will follow the same procedure in describing camping equipment.

One should always go to a reliable dealer when buying equipment for camping. There are many businessmen who are eager to cater to the camper. Various chain stores such as J. C. Penney's, Montgomery Wards, and Sears and Roebuck handle some top-grade equipment. Such equipment

[2]C. B. Colby, "Camping, the 'In' Vacation," Outdoor Holiday Fun Guide, (Wichita, Kansas: The Coleman Company, 1967), p. 10.

[3]"Guide to Family Camping," (Rochester, New York: Department of Parks, County of Monroe, May, 1966), p. 10.

can often be purchased at an advantageous price during a special sale event if the novice camper knows what he wants and can recognize good quality. This is true for cut-rate stores also. However, it cannot be stressed enough that poor equipment must never be purchased. A financial short-cut in purchasing such items may mean headaches and a premature end to camping.

CHAPTER III

SHELTER

Choosing a Tent. There are numerous types of tents which are suitable for family shelter. What will satsify one family may not satisfy another. Different families have different tastes with varying needs. These should be considered when buying a tent.

The type of camping a family plans to do is a big factor in tent selection. If a family is to travel to the campsite by station wagon or with a small trailer, they will be able to select a larger, heavier tent than if they were planning to back-pack equipment or travel by canoe.[1]

When discussing the weight of a tent, it is the material itself to which the reference is being made. There are basically three different materials used by most tent manufacturers. These are duck, poplin, and drill. Duck is a cotton material. It is considered to be the best tent material. This is because it has a high thread count and is of moderate weight—between seven to nine ounces per square yard.[2] Duck has what is known as a square weave. Such a weave is closely woven and can stand constant wear and temperature extremes.[3]

Poplin is also a popular tent material for top-quality tents. It is closely-woven from fine-combed yarn, and is very sturdy. Many campers like its smooth texture and yet good quality.[4]

[1]The Editors of Better Homes and Gardens, Family Camping, p. 43.

[2]Colby, "Camping, the 'In' Vacation," Outdoor Holiday Fun Guide, p. 31.

[3]Editors of Sunset Books, Sunset Family Camping, p. 19.

[4]Ibid.

The third type of material used is drill which is cheaper and lighter than duck. Drill can be identified most easily by its slanting weave. The horizontal threads go over one vertical thread and under two. In order to get a good quality drill tent, one must purchase a tent with material of seven ounces per square yard in weight. This material type is the lowest in cost of the three.[5]

It is believed that to buy a tent of any material other than duck, poplin, or drill would result in an inferior, unsatisfactory tent. Nylon is sometimes used in tent construction because it is light, strong, and doesn't mildew. However, many campers claim that nylon has little resistance to abrasion; it tends to lose elasticity and crumble; and it doesn't "breathe" as well as canvas tents. A nylon tent soon becomes hot and stuffy inside.[6]

Colby, the camping expert, makes this statement about tent material: "I have found a plied yarn Army duck material treated with a 'dry finish' repellent and weighing about eight ounces per square yard to be the best for all uses."[7]

A "dry finish" or "bone-dry treatment" is nothing more than a process of adding materials to the fabric which act as a lasting water repellent when they become wet for the first time. For this reason, a new tent should be erected in the back yard before going on the first outing. Then it should be hosed down so that it is waterproof before leaving.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Colby, loc. cit.

The older, heavier tents have a wax or oil treatment on them for waterproofing. This, of course, makes them less desirable because of added weight and less "breathing" qualities.

The Thermos Company of Norwich, Connecticut, has published seven good features which should be considered when looking for the "right" tent. These features are: (1) roominess, (2) portability, (3) compactness, (4) quick set-up, (5) ventilation and protection from insects, (6) rain repellent cloth, (7) mildew proofing.[8]

Roominess is merely a natter of floor space--the number of square feet per person. This figure can be misleading as an "A" or wedge type tent may have good floor space, but its sharply slanting walls make much of the area unusable except for storage. Ideally, the walls should approach the vertical so that the living space is almost as large as the floor space. A center pole should be avoided as this takes a great deal of the space away from the living area.[9]

In figuring tent size, the following guide can be used to allow adequate room for each camper.

two campers----------9' by 9' (floor area)
three campers----------9' by 11'
four campers----------10' by 12'
five campers----------10' by 12'
six campers----------9' by 15' [10]

The portability of a tent is very important as tents often have large poles or aluminum outside framing which may be hard to pack and transport. Any family with a small car to be used as the means of

[8] Ross Mc Cluskey, The Thermos Guide to Modern Family Camping, (United States: King-Seely Thermos Company, 1962), p. 11.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

camping travel should keep this factor in mind while selecting a tent.[11]

Compactness refers to the advantages of being able to fold a tent into a small bundle while it is not in use.[12]

Quick set-up is a most important factor, especially when a family drives into a campsite late in the evening. They are hungry and tired, and a sprinkling rain has already begun. The amount of time it takes to set up the tent becomes crucial.

To give adequate ventilation and protection from insects, a tent should have a sewn-in floor, a full-size entrance, a window for cross ventilation (very important in summer camping), and net soreening for all openings to keep out the flying insects. Zippered closures which zip from either the outside or inside are a great convenience when the weather is blustery and rainy. A canopy is also an added proteotion from both sun and rain.[13]

There are a few other suggestions concerning ventilation which are important. While nylon is excellent in a floor, fiberglass is the best material for window and door screening. It is almost indestructible, does not age appreciably, and thus will remain tough for years.[14]

Good tents are treated to repel rain. However, if the tent walls are touching some object or person during a rain, capillary action may cause them to leak.

Good tents should also be treated against mildew. Mildew can

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Colby, op. cit., p. 32.

ruin a tent during storage. Even though tents should be completely dry before storage, the mildew treatment is necessary.[15]

Types of Tents

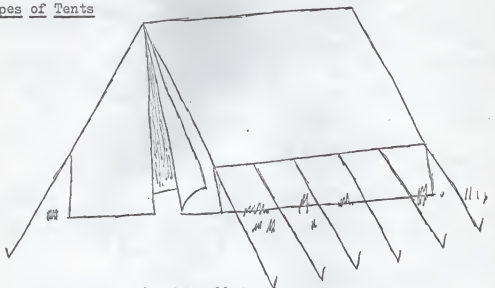


Fig. 1 The wall tent

The wall tent is good for long stays but unsuitable for short ones because it is heavy, bulky, and hard to erect. In a nine by eleven foot size, the cost is from sixty to one-hundred-thirty dollars. These tents are made as large as sixteen by twenty feet, and even larger by special order. This type of tent has the advantage of providing maximum usable space with no center pole. Most wall tents have a height of seven to seven-and-a-half feet at the ridge. This height is a good minimum height.[16]

[15] Mc Cluskey, op. cit., p. 12.

[16] Family Camping, Information Services, Department of National Health and Welfare, Canada, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1965), p. 8.



Fig 2 The bungalow tent

The wall tent with six foot sides is usually referred to as a "cottage" or bungalow tent. It is a little canvas house suitable for summer-long stays at one place. The average size is nine by twelve feet, weighing one hundred pounds. The cost is from one hundred dollars and up. An advantage of this tent is that it is large and roomy. It can be divided into rooms with plenty of headroom for the average size person. The disadvantages of the bungalow tent are that it is large and bulky for handling, cannot be erected very quickly, and generally requires three to four people to pitch it properly.[17]

[17] Ibid.

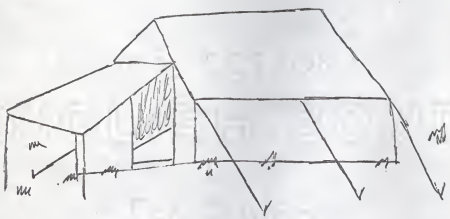


Fig. 3 The explorer tent

The explorer tent is the adventurer's tent, designed to withstand wind, snow, and rain. It is in the cost range of two hundred dollars in a good quality fabric. A few families camp successfully with this type of tent, but it is not generally recommended for family camping. It is heavy and actually quite expensive considering the amount of floor space. Its sides are not as high as in the bungalow tent, and this cuts down on usable floor space. Since it is known as a very rugged tent, it is very popular with Boy Scout troops.[18]

[18] Ibid., p. 9

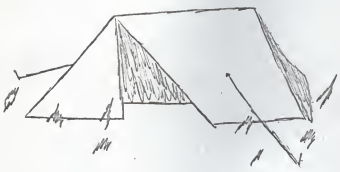


Fig. 4 The pup tent

The pup tent has been called an institution, for it has been on the camping scene for years.[19] It is a small tent suitable for only two campers who ask little comfort. However, it is big enough for an air mattress and sleeping bags. The dimensions are about five by seven by three-and-a-half feet high. Cost-wise, it is very economical with a price of only ten to twenty dollars. Actually, the pup tent is a good bargain if a family is looking for an extra tent for the children or for storage space. If possible, the pup tent should have a floor and a rear window. Considering the amount of usefulness it can give, the amount of weight it adds to the camp load is immeasurable.[20]

[19]The Editors of Better Homes and Gardens, Family Camping, p. 48.

[20]Information Services, Canada, op. cit., p. 12.

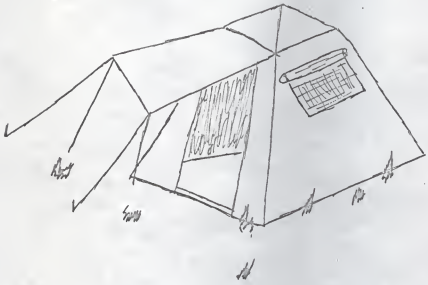


Fig. 5 The umbrella tent

The umbrella tent is popular with touring campers because it is fairly easy to erect. Older umbrella tents were erected like a beach umbrella with a center pole. However, the modern and most popular models today have outside aluminum framing. This gives more usable floor space, but a tent without a center pole is not as sturdy in stormy weather.[21]

The cost of an umbrella tent ranges from ninety to one-hundred-forty dollars for the nine by eleven foot, corner pole style. It is possible to add extra rooms depending on the family needs. There are models which have up to three extensions. Such models will sleep nine adults.[22]

The disadvantages of an umbrella tent are that it does not ventilate well, and its high sides make it a poor tent for windy weather. It is suggested that on windy days such a tent be collapsed or guy ropes tied to its corners.

[21] Ibid., p. 13. [22] The Editors of Sunset Books, op. cit., p. 20.

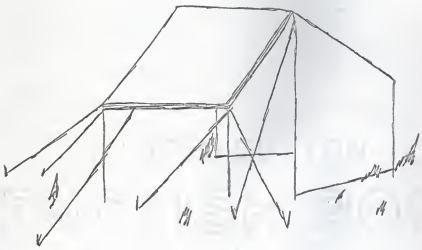


Fig. 6 The baker tent

The baker tent is so named because it looks like a reflector oven. The front is open to the heat of fire. It comes in varying sizes costing from forty to one-hundred-eighty dollars. This is not a popular tent by any means, but it does have its purpose. Its greatest asset is that it is adaptable for cold weather when the heat from an open fire can warm anyone sitting inside the tent. However, few families are satisfied with a baker tent.[23]

[23]Information Services, Canada, op. cit., p. 13.

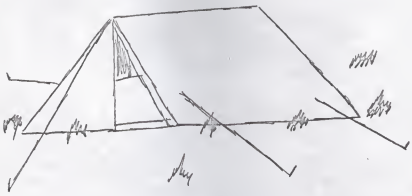


Fig. 7 The wedge tent

The wedge, or "A" type, tent has sharply sloping walls that prevent full use of the floor space. The sizes from about seven by seven feet to sixteen by twenty feet in good quality are from forty to one-hundred-seventy dollars. This tent looks something like an overgrown pup tent and is easy to erect. It is not a good family tent because of the poor usable space due to the sharply sloping roof, but it does make a good extra tent for children or storage. However, while storing in this type of tent, it is important to remember that items stored directly against the walls will cause leakage (provided such items are actually touching the walls).[24]

[24] Ibid., p. 14.

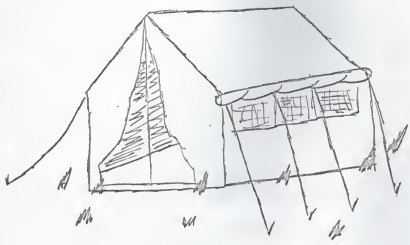


Fig. 8 The tropical tent

The tropical tent is a variation of the bungalow tent with open, net-screened sides admitting air. With a large overall fly, a good seven-and-a-half by ten foot tropical tent runs up to four-hundred-fifty dollars. (The fly is the covering for the screened walls. It is made from the same material as the tent itself.) The high cost of tropical tents makes it out of the price range of most families. Actually, such a large amount of ventilation as this tent gives is not necessary.[25]

[25] Ibid.

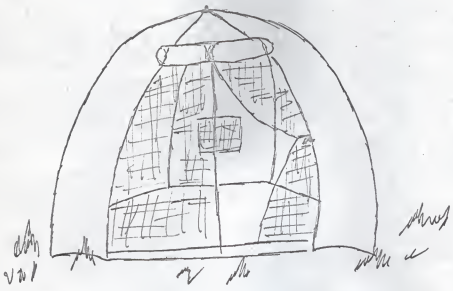


Fig. 9 The "pop" tent

The "pop" tent is a recent innovation which has gained wide acclaim. The big reason for this is the ability to erect the tent quickly with only one person necessary to do the job. Even when the tent has been pitched, it can be moved to nearby locations. For the most part, no guy ropes are needed as its own weight and that of the sleeping gear holds the tent down well. However, guy ropes are recommended in case of a storm.

The construction of a "pop" tent is simple and interesting. The framework is on the outside of the tent in the form of fiberglass rods that pull apart like a fishing rod. When erecting this tent, one simply fits the rods together, pushes down on the top,and the rods pop outward to give a strong structure. There are no obstacles of poles inside the tent although the headroom is not as adequate as in the umbrella tent. For day by day moving, the "pop" tent is highly recommended—especially if only one or two campers is involved.

Care of the Tent. The life of a tent is shortened or lengthened by the care it receives. With proper care, a good tent will last twenty-five years. Mistreat it, and a new tent will be ruined in one season.[26]

The most important aspect of care is never store a wet or damp tent for over a few hours. Mildew thrives in this situation and causes rotting of the material. Also, grease and dirt spots should be washed with a mild soap and scrubbed with a brush before storing.[27]

Tent Accessories. Tent accessories include rope, pegs, poles, runners, extra tarpaulins, water-proofing, canopy, rubber casters for cots, a rug, and a broom. It should be stressed that all of this equipment will be part of the camp load, and therefore must be kept at a minimum.[28]

Sisal rope is a good rope for the tie downs. It does not stretch a great deal and wears well. Clothesline rope is not recommended because it rots and stretches easily. Nylon or polyethylene rope is more expensive but proves to be most satisfactory.[29]

Many people will prefer wooden pegs as these can be made at camp or at home. Metal pegs have the advantage of being easier to drive into hard ground, and they will never split. Railroad or bridge spikes work well too.

Tent runners are very valuable equipment. (See Fig. 10 below.) They should be used on all guy ropes that serve as holding sources.

[26]The Editors of Sunset Books, op. cit., p. 24.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Information Services, Canada, op. cit., p. 22.

[29]The Editors of Sunset Books, loc. cit.

With runners, it is easy to tighten or loosen the ropes as needed, such as after a rain when shrinkage takes place. Wood runners are best as they do not cause much friction and wear on the rope.[30]

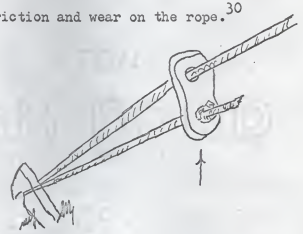


Fig. 10 A tent runner

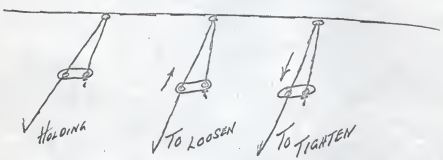


Fig. 11 Use of the tent runner

[30] Ibid., p. 22.

Tarpaulins are considered an accessory that is a must. They can be used as ground cloths, extra shelter, windbreaks, or as covering for camp items at camp or while traveling. A fifteen by six foot water repellent canvas tarpaulin sells for under ten dollars, and becomes a very worthwhile investment.[31]

An awning is a convenient accessory which gives added protection for the tent and the campers. Usually the awning is erected over the tent and extends out to make a protective porch. This also helps the ventilation in the tent proper.[32]

How to Pitch a Tent. As most campers know, pitching a tent can be either a pleasure or pure horror. There is a right way, and also a wrong way. One of the most important rules is to first select a good campsite. (The actual selection will be covered in Chapter X, so will not be covered further at this point.) Above all, a good, level, smooth area for the tent should be chosen.

For all practical purposes, these instructions will concern pitching an umbrella tent. A few practice sessions in the backyard before the camping trip will make the pitching of the tent later on that much easier.

First of all, the tent floor should be stretched out and stakes placed in the corners. After this has been done, the framework can be erected. If it is outside framework, it can be erected before

[31] Ibid., p. 23.

[32] The Editors of Better Homes and Gardens, op. cit., p. 45.

the tent. If the framework goes inside the tent, then one person must crawl inside and fit the sections together. Any additional guy ropes can then be secured to give the necessary added strength.[33]

The standing tent should look neat and smooth with square corners and straight ridge and wall lines. The canvas (or tent material) should not be tightened too much because rain or even heavy dew may cause shrinkage. This could make the tent wall rip, or the stakes pull from the ground. Such action has brought the tent down on campers in the middle of the night. If there is much chance of rain, the tent ropes should be loosened slightly before going to bed.[34]

Actually, the ease with which a tent can be pitched depends on how it was struck on the last trip. The corners should be folded neatly and all ropes should be curled inside before the last fold is made. The camper should leave out just enough rope to bind the tent in its folded form. If such instructions are followed, the next tent erection will go smoothly.

[33]George Laycock, "How to Pitch a Tent," Camping Journal, (June, 1967), p. 49.

[34]Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

SLEEPING GEAR

Basically, sleeping gear consists of sleeping bags, blankets, a ground cloth, and an air mattress.[1]

Some campers prefer cots to let them sleep off the ground. However, cots are not considered a necessity like the other items. If a cot is used during cold or damp weather, it should be remembered that the cold coming from below the cot seems greater than the cold from above. To combat this, more layers of bedding should be placed under the sleeping person than on top of him. Newspapers work very well as protection layers.

A camping trip becomes a grind if all campers cannot get a good night's rest every night. The equipment that makes for comfortable sleeping is a good air mattress and a warm sleeping bag. To this can be added the minor items such as a ground cloth, a pillow, and necessary blankets. Most of this section will deal only with the sleeping bags and air mattresses as these two items are the most important. The two go together and should not be separated.

Air Mattresses. A good air mattress constitutes a strong rubber fabric with a cloth covering. Some mattresses have a built-in foot pump which is of great help in inflating the mattress. If there is no foot pump, blowing by mouth or a bicycle pump can be used. The mattress should never be over-inflated as this will decrease the life

[1] Jack Kirkham, "Sound Sleep and Camping," Outdoor Holiday Fun Guide, (Wichita: The Coleman Company, Inc., 1967), p. 55.

of the mattress, and it also makes a hard bed. The mattress should be inflated so that the hips of the sleeper are almost brushing the ground when lying on it.[2] This gives plenty of support. Another method of testing the amount of air to use is by having the camper sit on the mattress. While sitting, he should barely feel the ground under him. Then when lying, he will not feel the ground underneath.[3]

Sleeping Bags. Sleeping bags should be chosen with the temperature of the weather to be encountered in mind. The shape of the sleeping bag should also be considered, along with the amount of money which can be spent. However, it does not pay to try to save money when purchasing sleeping bags. Inferior bags result in poor sleep.

There are two materials that have proven inferior as far as a fill in sleeping bags. These are wool and kapok. The best fillers are goose or duck down, or a synthetic such as dacron. In fact, goose down is almost twice as efficient per volume of fill weight as the next best insulation (dacron).[4] This makes a goose down bag lighter and easier to pack. A goose down-filled bag of four pounds has a comfort range for weather varying from zero to minus twenty degrees Fahrenheit. The same bag filled with six pounds of man-made fiber would have a comfort range in ten degree above zero weather, and above.[5]

A good goose down-filled bag may cost over a hundred dollars, and therefore is not a very feasible bag for the average camper. The common camper doesn't need this kind of equipment, though, for most of

[3]The Editors of Better Homes and Gardens, op. cit., p. 54.

[4]Information Services, Canada, op. cit., p. 88. [5]Kirkham, loc. cit.

his camping is done during the summer months.

Another important factor to consider in buying sleeping bags is their exterior covering. The heavier, more durable coverings are the most practical for general camping purposes. Number twelve duck, or the new Kodiak duck found on the Coleman sleeping bags, is very satisfactory. Lighter exterior coverings may be all right for warm weather or trailer camping where the bags take little abuse.[5]

The previous exterior coverings have breathing qualities which are very important. The only time a camper needs a waterproof bag is when sleeping under the stars with no overhead protection. There is nothing more uncomfortable than a damp sleeping bag, so precautions should be taken to keep it dry. Because of the moisture possibility and for health reasons, it is best tolerated if both the nose and mouth are left outside the bag while sleeping.[6]

Sleeping bags have basically two shapes, either rectangular or mummy. The rectangular has more room as they are from thirty-three by seventy-six inches up to thirty-nine by eighty-five inches. The mummy bag fits the body very snugly.

Minor factors concerning sleeping bags are the zipper, inside lining, snaps, and carrying cases. The zipper should be a jumbo zipper in size, for it will last longer and work more easily. It is also important that it be a full zipper bag so that one full side can be unzipped along with the bottom. Then it will open flat so it can be

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

zipped to another bag to make a double sleeping bag when desired. Such a zipper also allows for better airing.[7]

The inside lining should be of a cotton flannel which will wear well. The lining should also be checked to see if it has proper quilting so that the fill cannot move around and become lumpy.[8]

A bag liner which snaps will help to keep the sleeping bag clean. For the most part, the liner will receive most of its wear from being cleaned. A liner also adds warmth. This liner should have double mattress pockets so that it can be used if the bag is converted into a double bag.[9]

Carrying cases for sleeping bags are a wise accessory as they keep the bag clean and dry. Any such case should be well-tailored.

It is interesting to note that by buying a good sleeping bag which today has a life expectancy of twenty-five years, one's lodging expense will run around one dollar and twenty-five cents to one dollar and fifty cents per person per year. Such a figure makes even an expensive air mattress and sleeping bag seem like a real bargain.[10]

[7] Ibid., p. 57.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., p. 58.

[10] Ibid., p. 59.

CHAPTER V

CAMP FURNITURE

Only the necessities in camp furniture will be included in this paper. First on the list is a folding table that can be stored and transported easily. The best buy would be a top quality aluminum table, but a steel table can be purchased for about half the amount paid for the aluminum table. Some campsites have table facilities, but this can never be guaranteed. If there is a campsite table, the folding table can be used for a welcome work area.

As a minimum, the camping family needs one camp stool for each camper. Most campers prefer the folding camp stool. It's also nice to have a light lawn chair or chaise lounge for added relaxation.

A combination heater-stove will add to camping pleasure on chilly nights and mornings. It burns either gasoline or kerosene, and produces good quantities of heat.[1] Tremendous strides have been made along this line. Several companies now make a catalystic heater which burns white gas or Coleman fuel. However, there is no flame, no harmful odor, and therefore can be used safely inside a closed tent. This type of heater gives out as much as five thousand BTU, and costs from fifteen to thirty dollars. (Even though this stove is fumeless, good ventilation is still advised in order to keep the oxygen plentiful.)

A small radio is another essential item. This should be battery-powered. It is most helpful in obtaining news and important weather

[1]The Editors of Better Homes and Gardens, Family Camping, p. 68.

bulletins. Storm warnings are important to the camper.

A good flashlight (floodlight type) is also an essential. It will be of great help for short hurried trips after dark. The camper can buy such a flashlight in the six volt or twelve volt capacity, and get satisfactory results from either. A gasoline lantern is recommended for long periods of use. Such lanterns should be kept in the open when in use. A burning light should never be placed in or near a tent.

CHAPTER VI

COOKING AND EATING EQUIPMENT

In order to collect all the equipment needed for the preparation and consumption of food, a check list should be made. An adequate check list is included at the end of this chapter, but a few of the major items will be discussed first.

The secret of success while cooking is a simple approach. The long lists of herbs and condiments belong back home. Complicated recipes hardly match the simple life of camping. Camp cooking should be mainly to fill up all hands with delicious, nourishing, but fairly plain food. Simplicity does not mean tasteless, but rather a minimum of utensils, ingredients, and cooking operations involved.[1]

Stoves. The great majority of campers (other than those who camp by trailer) do their cooking on portable camp stoves. These are marketed in one, two, and three burner types, designed to burn gasoline, kerosene, alcohol, or bottled gas. Camp stoves are not as cheerful as the traditional campfire, but they are considerably more efficient.[2]

The one burner stove is not very popular because of the limited heat area. The two and three burner stoves will burn for three to four hours on two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half pints of fuel.[3] These stoves are constructed with different types of fueling techniques. In using the popular Coleman stove which has two or three burners, one

[1]Fred Sturges, "Campfire Cookery," Camping Manual, (New York: Science and Mechanics Publishing Company, 1967), p. 23.

[2]The Editors of Sunset Books, Sunset Family Camping, p. 45. [3]Ibid.

must pour the fuel into the reservoir. Then pressure is pumped into the fuel by means of a simple pump in the side of the reservoir. This pressure will last for at least an hour, and then repumping should take place. Canned gas, already pressurized, can be purchased for use in certain stoves.

Of the available fuels, white gasoline is by far the most popular one. Kerosene provides a good hot flame, but requires days for evaporation if spilled. Alcohol burns with a hotter flame than gasoline, and its flame can be doused with water in an emergency. (Water merely spreads a gasoline-fed flame.) Because of this safety factor, alcohol is often used for cooking in boats.[3]

Bottled gas has certain advantages in that it is clean, does not spill, requires no priming or pumping, burns better, and never blackens pots and pans. However, the cost of bottled gas is ten times that of gasoline. It is also difficult to purchase the disposable refill containers if the camping family is far from a metropolitan area.[4]

Ice Boxes. For the average camper, the ice box is a must--particularly in family camping. It is recommended that each family buy the size, make, model, and quality of ice chest it needs. The author has found that using two ice chests is most handy. One chest is used for carrying extra ice frozen in empty half gallon milk containers, and the other one is for the perishable food covered with small amounts of ice. As the ice in this second chest melts, fresh ice can be added from the

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

first chest.

There are four basic and simple rules that will help a camper in buying an ice box. This box may be a metal one, or one of the popular styrofoam types.

1. The inside of the box should be easy to clean. There should be rounded corners and smooth joints.
2. Water from melted ice should be easy to drain. A drain plug is preferred. If the box must be tipped for draining, no water should run back into the insulation in the metal chests.
3. The lid should be held in place by clamps as protection against both heat entry and insects and predators.
4. If dry ice is used, there must be an escape route for the gas as the ice melts. Otherwise, it may crush the box.[5]

Cooking and Eating Equipment Check List. The function of the check list is to insure that no necessary item of equipment is left at home because it was not considered. Everything on the following list is not necessarily needed by each camping family. It is surprising how many of these items can be found right in the home.

Cooking Equipment

_____ Stove
_____ Charcoal grill
_____ Fuel for stove
_____ Funnel for fuel
_____ Charcoal
_____ Charcoal lighter fluid

_____ Coffee pot
_____ Dutch oven
_____ Oven for gas stove
_____ Measuring cup
_____ Pancake turner
_____ Meat fork, large
_____ Cooking spoons, long handle
_____ Butcher knife
_____ Paring knife

Cooking Utensils

_____ two sauce pans with covers (two quart size)
_____ two cooking pots

[5] Ibid., p. 47.

Cooking and Eating Equipment Check List (Continued)

____ Vegetable parer
____ Can opener
____ Wire whisk or egg beater
____ Salt and pepper shakers
____ Plastic mixing container
____ Frying pan

Food Storage

____ Ice box
____ Plastic food containers
____ Thermos jug
____ Large water container
____ Storage box

Washing Equipment

____ Scouring pads
____ Detergent soap
____ Dish cloths
____ Dish towels
____ Dish washing pan

Eating Utensils

____ Spoons
____ Knives
____ Forks
____ Plates, bowls, and cups

Miscellaneous

____ Paper towels and napkins
____ Wax paper
____ Aluminum foil
____ Ice pick
____ Plastic bags
____ Pot holders
____ Bacon grease container
____ Plastic tablecloth
____ Matches in waterproof container
____ Metal bucket

Food (All items necessary for hearty eating)

A special box for storing kitchen equipment will prove extremely handy. One can buy kitchen kits which will keep the utensils orderly and clean. Orderliness and availability of equipment while cooking will make the job more enjoyable. If cooking becomes too much of a chore, Mother (or the camp cook) may never want to go camping again.

CHAPTER VII

CLOTHING

Many beginning campers worry that they will have to buy a new wardrobe for their trip. Actually, most families already possess nearly every item of clothing which will be needed. The trick is to know what is needed, and also how much.[1]

In general, camp clothing should be light in weight, comfortable, practical, and fashioned from fabrics that do not show dirt, are easy to wash, and are not prone to snag or tear. The experienced camper chooses clothes that will protect him in any weather. He keeps his needs simple. Beginning campers invariably take more clothing than they need.[2]

Children's clothes should be washable or expendable. A sufficient quantity for frequent changes should be brought. They should provide extra warmth and good sun protection because children tend to feel cold more intensely than adults do. They are also more sensitive to exposure to sunlight.[3]

In general, a camper can use the same clothes which he would wear while working in the garden or lounging on the patio.[4] By keeping the possibility of rainy, cold, or extremely hot weather in mind, and then choosing his clothing accordingly; he will be dressed sufficiently.

[1]The Editors of Sunset Books, Sunset Family Camping, p. 37.

[2]Ibid. [3]Ibid. [4]Ibid.

A check list including clothing and personal items for each family member should be made. This list would include the following:

____ Underwear	____ Sweaters, sweatshirts
____ Suits	____ Raincoats
____ Shirts, blouses	____ Gloves
____ Pants	____ Scarves
____ Belts	____ Pajamas
____ Dresses, skirts	____ Kleenex
____ Socks	____ Watches
____ Shoes	____ Glasses (prescription and sun)
____ Thongs or sandals	____ Washcloths and towels
____ Boots	____ Swimsuits
____ Innersoles	____ Combs, Brushes
____ Hats with wide brims	____ Toothbrushes
____ Coats, jackets	____ Shaving equipment[5]

[5] Schmidt, "Guide to Family Camping," American Camping Association, p. 8.

CHAPTER VIII

BASIC EQUIPMENT CHECK LIST

By ___ Auto ___ Boat ___ Train ___ Hiking

Trip to _____ Number in party _____

Dates _____ Probable weather _____

Days out _____

Shelter
- ____ Tent
- ____ Tarpaulin
- ____ Tentpoles
- ____ Stakes
- ____ Ropes
- ____ Mosquito netting

Containers
- ____ Pack
- ____ Duffle bag
- ____ Clothing case
- ____ Laundry bag
- ____ Suitcase

Sleeping Gear
- ____ Sleeping bag with waterproof container
- ____ Blankets
- ____ Groundcloth (waterproof)
- ____ Air matresses
- ____ Pillows
- ____ Cots (folding)

Clothing
- ____ Clothing (See p. 41.)

Food
- ____ All items necessary for hearty eating

Cooking Gear
- ____ Table
- ____ Stools
- ____ Items on check list, pp. 38-39

Personal Items
- ____ Toilet kit
- ____ Towels
- ____ Wash basin
- ____ Toilet paper
- ____ First aid kit
- ____ Insect repellent
- ____ Headnet
- ____ Poison ivy medicine
- ____ Sunburn lotion
- ____ Any special medicines already being taken
- ____ Survival kit
- ____ Compass
- ____ Alarm clock (for the fisherman)
- ____ Whistles (one for each child to wear)
- ____ Needle and thread
- ____ Clothespins
- ____ Mirror
- ____ Cosmetics

Tools
- ____ Axe, large
- ____ Axe, hand
- ____ File, whetstone
- ____ Shovel
- ____ Saw
- ____ Knife, pocket and sheath
- ____ Ditty bag
- ____ Miscellaneous and repair materials
- ____ Hammer, pliers, skrewdriver

Basic Equipment Check List (Continued)

Lights

____ Flashlight
____ Batteries
____ Lantern
____ Lantern fuel
____ Matches
____ Candles

Recreation Equipment

____ Games, toys
____ Books, magazines
____ Camera
____ Film
____ Flashbulbs
____ Binoculars
____ Fishing tackle
____ Gun
____ Ammunition
____ Special licenses (hunting, fishing, travel)

Papers

____ Notebook
____ Pencils, pens
____ Identification
____ Money
____ Stamps
____ Travelers checks
____ Maps
____ Tour information and books
____ Nature lore books
____ Insurance information

Auto Equipment

____ Seat covers
____ Tool kit, pump
____ Spare tire
____ Jack
____ Gloves
____ Flare
____ Fire extinguisher
____ Tire chains
____ Tow chain or rope
____ Cleaning equipment (rags, sponges)
____ Whisk broom
____ Oil
____ Gasoline (extra)
____ Extension light or spotlight
____ Window screens
____ Window curtains
____ Car cabinet (lunch box)
____ Refuse bag
____ Car top luggage carrier
____ Trailer hitch
____ Luggage trailer

Boat Equipment

____ Canoe or boat
____ Paddles or oars
____ Carrying yoke
____ Life jackets
____ Ropes
____ Car top boat carrier
____ Boat trailer and hitch
____ Skiis
____ Outboard motor[1]

[1]Schmidt, "Guide to Family Camping," American Camping Association, pp. 10-11. (The entire Basic Equipment Check List is taken from Schmidt's article.)

CHAPTER IX

PLANNING THE TRIP

Has the story ever been told of the man who came home from work one day and said, "Let's go camping, Honey!" So they got the children together and drove off for a happy holiday.[1]

No one should believe a word of it. Camping is not that simple. In fact, it takes some long hours of good planning to make a camping vacation a success. The individual who said, "Happy vacations are planned vacations." knew what he was saying.

Planning can never be done too far in advance. The time to start planning for the next trip is any time after the family arrives home from the preceding trip. A good time for these planning sessions is during the long winter evenings. Going over the equipment list before Christmas may make the task for Santa Claus much easier.[2]

In planning a trip, one of the first decisions to make is what kind of a vacation can the family afford in terms of both money and time.[3] Once this is determined, the maps and brochures can be studied by the whole family. With various jobs and numerous summer activities, the entire family must be considered. The more the family helps plan the trip, the greater will be the pre-trip excitement and anticipation.

If proper information is not on hand, letters can be written to Chamber of Commerces, government facilities, and directly to rangers

[1] Information Services, Canada, op. cit., p. 9

[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

in native parks. The camping family of today can find public campgrounds with modern conveniences such as running water, electricity, and bathroom facilities (including showers); or they may camp away from all such establishments with only Mother Nature. A happy medium between the two is also available. Wherever the camping takes place, it will only be successful if there is careful, advance planning.

CHAPTER X

SELECTING A CAMPSITE

Most public campgrounds have one big advantage--their campsites are on level ground with a picturesque view and fine roads for access. However, the author will direct this paper toward choosing a campsite which is not a man-made one. This does not mean that the campsite must be completely in the wilderness away from any hint of civilization.

The most important requirement of a good campsite is that it be near water.[1] A certain amount of water can be carried in, but this will usually take care of only human consumption. Water will be needed for personal hygiene as well as for washing dishes and clothes. If the camper is not sure of the purity of the water near the campsite, he should always boil it or treat it chemically.

Proximity to water is not synonymous with being at the water's edge in low ground. Camping on low ground near a stream should be avoided even if the water is handy and beautiful.[2] Peaceful streams can quickly become raging torrents during a downpour.

In general, a good campsite should offer an almost-level area which can be cleared and used for the tent. This area must be large enough to allow proper ditching around the tent for drainage purposes. A good campsite is also preferrably within easy reach by car or boat

[1] Colby, "Camping, the 'In' Vacation," Outdoor Holiday Fun Guide, p. 23.

[2] Ibid., p. 24.

to civilization.[3]

Damp ground should be avoided as it attracts mosquitoes. In such an area, the equipment will not dry sufficiently. Instead, high ground with good drainage makes an ideal campsite. A higher elevation will also help keep the campers out of the worst zone of dew and fog.[4]

Partial shading from trees is desirable, but camping under large or dead trees is not safe. It is best if camp can be established on the east or northeast side of trees so that the camp gets the early morning sun for warmth and drying purposes, and afternoon shade during the hottest portion of the day. Shrubs and trees should be observed for evidence of strong air currents. Gaps in wooded areas have obviously been caused by strong wind currents, and so such areas should be avoided. In these areas, the trees are lopsided with heavier growth on the side away from the wind.[5]

If the campsite is within sight of water, in the daytime the wind will come off the water and up a gully or canyon. At night, when the water is warmer than the surrounding terrain, the wind will shift and be drawn down the gully or canyon toward the water.[6]

In summary, the following basics should be remembered when choosing a campsite:

1. The site should be high and one that drains naturally.
2. The site should be exposed to morning sun.
3. The site should be shaded from the afternoon sun.
4. The site should have good air circulation which will discourage insects.

[3]The Editors of Better Homes and Gardens, Family Camping, p. 150.

[4]Colby, op. cit., p. 25. [5]Ibid. [6]Ibid.

5. The site should be sheltered from prevailing wind.
6. There should be some degree of privacy.
7. Nearby sanitary facilities should be present, or otherwise provided.
8. An ample firewood supply should be nearby.
9. There must be garbage disposal facilities.
10. It is desirable to have a source of safe drinking water.
11. The site should be located above marshy spots and other mosquito breeding sources.

The following should be avoided:

1. Gullies, ravines, or other depressions and low spots.
2. Mud flats or rocky ground.
3. Dense undergrowth which may harbor flies and other insects.
4. Big trees or dead ones which may shed heavy limbs. Lightning could strike them, and they may drip continuously after a heavy rain.

CHAPTER XI

LIVING AT CAMP

When the campsite has been found, the family chores begin. No two families follow the same routine for setting up and organizing the camp. Work must be systematized if it is to be done efficiently.

Camp early! It doesn't pay to wait until the last minute to establish camp. Time slips by very quickly when a fishing rod or bat and ball is in hand. Before it is realized, the sun is setting. Most experienced campers say that two hours should be allowed for setting up camp. Even more desirable is to begin the set-up at noon or early afternoon.[1] Pitching a tent in the dark is very difficult, frustrating, and inefficient.

Work is better accomplished if every member of the family is assigned specific tasks. While the tent is being pitched, someone else can be clearing the ground for a cooking-eating area.[2]

A "wash-up" area should be specified and completely furnished with basin, canvas water bag, mirror, and personal hygiene items. The lantern will be most efficient if hung nearby. The ice boxes and camp stove should then be placed in an easily accessible area. Next to be placed is the transistor radio. This radio is most important in receiving weather bulletins and news. With a few other "niceties," the campsite becomes livable and comfortable.[3]

It is always a good idea to ditch the tent for drainage. The

[1] Colby, "Camping, the 'In' Vacation," Outdoor Holiday Fun Guide, p. 25.

[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

ditch should be located so that its inner side runs about two inches inside a vertical line from the eaves' edge to the ground. This leaves four inches to catch water bounding off the roof during severe storms. Draining water must always be directed away from the campsite.[4]

A necessity for every campsite is some facility for toilet and garbage disposal. If nothing is provided, facilities can be made with a shovel. A spot downwind should be chosen. It should be about two hundred feet from camp. After the spot has been chosen, an elongated ditch two feet deep should be dug. All the dirt should be piled on one side of the ditch. Each time the facilities are used, it is advisable to throw in a little dirt. If sod has to be removed for the pit, it should be saved and then replaced when camp is broken.[5]

As a common courtesy to other campers, this area should be marked as "Bad ground—do not dig here." Two crossed sticks signify this. See Fig. 12 below.[6]

Fig. 12 Sticks marking contaminated ground

[4] Information Services, Canada, Family Camping, p. 40.

[5] Ibid., p. 41.

[6] Ibid., p. 42.

If wood will be used for a campfire or for cooking, a wood supply will be needed. It should be neatly stacked near the area where the fire will be. A fire extinguisher should be placed close to this area also. All family members should have received instructions as to its use.

Regardless of the amount of equipment, organization of it while at camp is a necessity. Assigned daily chores for each family member will help keep camp in an organized state.

Etiquette at Camp. It is appropriate to include in this chapter on living at camp a section concerning camp etiquette. When thoughtfulness and consideration toward others is shown, satisfaction and enjoyment of the whole trip is strengthened. Outdoor etiquette should be followed by all family members. Simple rules to follow are:

1. Keep the camping area clean.
2. Use the sanitation facilities.
3. Dispose of garbage.
4. Refrain from unnecessary noise while other campers are sleeping.
5. Do not cut down growing bushes or trees.
6. Be careful with fire.
7. Give your neighbor a hand when possible.
8. Camp at a respectable distance from other campers.
9. Don't throw rocks from trails.
10. Don't throw rocks into fishing or swimming water.
11. Play the radio softly.
12. Keep the axe in a case. Do not store it by driving into a tree.
13. Don't deface camp facilities, table, and other furniture.[7]

[7] Ibid.

Campfire. Most organized campgrounds have barbeques in each campsite, but these cannot replace the campfire for glamour. The time-honored picture of campers is that of a group sitting around a blazing fire, singing, talking, or just meditating. Substitute a barbeque for the campfire in the picture, and the entire effect is lost.[8]

A campfire can be built correctly quite easily. The area should first be cleared of all pine needles, leaves, and other combustible materials. This cleared area should be at least six feet in diameter. Secondly, the humus and topsoil must be removed to form a fire pit. Then the wood, chopped into proper lengths can be placed in the pit. Small twigs which burn most easily should be in the center of the larger pieces which are placed to form a tepee. The fire should never be allowed to burn too high, and enough wood should be kept on hand to keep the blaze going as long as it is desired.[9]

Wildlife Visitors and Insects. Many would-be campers hesitate to venture outdoors for fear they will encounter some of the many creatures who live there. Seeing these creatures is actually part of the fun of camping, and can be educational for the youngsters of the family.[10]

The most annoying pests are the insects with mosquitoes and biting flies heading the list by unanimous, unpopular vote. A good many times the mosquitoes can be avoided if the campsite is well-chosen. The low areas usually contain more insects, and should not

[8] Information Services, Canada, Family Camping, p. 42. [9] Ibid.

[10] The Editors of Better Homes and Gardens, Family Camping, p. 115.

be used for camping. The use of insect spray and repellent is quite effective. Ants may be combatted by sprinkling Comet (a powdered cleanser) on the ground near the tent and cooking area.[11]

A careful watch for ticks should be kept. It is a good idea to check each family member right before returning home. Ticks can carry Rocky Mountain spotted fever, but chances of contacting this fever are slight. Campers in tick country should tuck their pants inside their socks, and wear smooth-finish clothes. Chemicals placed in the socks will discourage ticks.[12]

If a tick is found, it should be removed immediately with a tweezer, being careful not to pull it apart so that the head is left in the flesh. Petroleum jelly, butter, or grease can also be used to draw the tick out from the flesh. It seals the skin and stops the tick from getting sufficient air. As a result, the tick must come out to breathe.[13]

Unless the camper knows his snakes well, it is wise to avoid all snakes. It is important to have and know how to use a snake bite kit. Most snakes are completely harmless, but rattlesnakes are found in most parts of the United States. They are very poisonous.

Any camper who has the opportunity to encounter a larger animal such as a deer or bear should consider himself lucky. Deer will

[11] Ibid., p. 116.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

usually spend only seconds in a camp while a bear may stay until a light or banging noise frightens him away. If he is not frightened, it is best to leave him alone. Let him have the camp to inspect until he decides to leave on his own. Food should never be left in a tent where the campers sleep. This can cause bears to come right into the tent while the campers are sleeping, if it is bear country.

First Aid. A good first aid course can be as important to a camper as how to make a fire. First aid will not be treated in this paper. It should be studied before the camp trip, and a good first aid book should be handy in camp for use at any time.[14]

The best first aid in all cases is preventative first aid. This means being able to recognize poisonous plants, not staying in the sun too long, taking no chances in the water, not becoming overly exhausted, and using common safety rules.

[14]Leonard Miracle and Maurice H. Decker, Complete Book of Camping, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p. 508.

CHAPTER XII

COOKING AT CAMP

Means of Cooking. When thinking of cooking, the heat source must be considered. Most campers use the fuel stoves which save time and work. However, if the open fire is never used, a large part of genuine camping is lost. Many campers shy away from the open fire because they know so little about building a proper fire.

The experienced outdoorsman is very sparing in the use of wood when he builds a fire. He makes a fire only large enough to bring the flame within an inch of his pan. To boil water for tea, a twig fire no larger than the burner of a gas range is used. Economy of both wood and flame is important.[1]

For some types of cooking such as broiling, the coals are used. Good coals will result if a large fire is built. The more quickly the fire is made, the better the coals will be for broiling.[2]

With a little experience, a camp cook will enjoy using a variety of heat sources. Commercial stoves, a cheery fire, or glowing coals can all be used effectively in successful camp cooking.

Available Camping Foods. It is true that not all of the fifty million who enjoy the outdoors will want the same foods fixed in the identical manner. But everyone will want to eat! Eating in the open air seems to increase the appetite.[3]

[1] Mc Cluskey, The Thermos Guide to Modern Family Camping, p. 15.

[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

Available camp foods are innumerous. With the use of ice, many of the same foods as are eaten at home are practical and easy to prepare at camp. Canned goods provide an endless variety and supply. Such goods are tasty, inexpensive, and can be prepared with a minimum of time, heat, and cooking utensils. The camp cook can cook a complete dinner from canned food without soiling a pan. It is recommended that cans be opened before heating, and then placed in water while they are over the heat. If the can is not opened before heating, much caution should be used while opening it. A small hole should be made to first let the hot air escape. When the bubbling ceases, the can may be opened completely.[4]

Several pages could be written on camp cooking, including menus. However, this is not the author's intent. Instead, it is stressed that a camping family can enjoy much the same hearty eating as they enjoy at home. Frozen foods are the only main exception.

The area of dried foods is worth mentioning because such foods can be taken anywhere, and the camping family can eat like kings. The greatest value of these foods is that they are so light they can be back-packed if necessary, making room for other items. All that is needed for their preparation is water or snow. Ounces of dried food become pounds of delicious nourishment.[5]

In making dried foods, the fresh food is first quick-frozen. Then ninety-nine per cent of the moisture is removed while it is still frozen.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Fred Sturges, "Chow Down Instantly," Camping Manual (New York: Science and Mechanics Publishing Company, 1967), p. 12.

This makes the product extremely light, fresh-tasting, and delicious when water is added and cooking takes place. (The food is not kept frozen until use.)[6]

These new dried foods are not generally found at the local grocery. They can be purchased quite often wherever sporting goods and camping equipment is found. Or they may be ordered through the mail by use of a catalog. One such catalog may be obtained by writing to : Chuck Wagon Foods, 176 Oak Street, Newton, Massachusetts, Zip #02164.

In order to be a successful camp cook, the menus must be planned in advance, and then supplemented when necessary. If there is to be fishing, fish alone should not be depended upon for a meal. It is wise to have another food along to use as a substitue if no fish are caught.

[6] Ibid.

CHAPTER XIII

ACTIVITIES IN CAMP

One of the greatest aspects of camping is that activities for the entire family are easy to find. Fishing, swimming, hunting for rocks and shells, playing ball, reading in the sun, hiking, and simple games can be enjoyed by Mother Dad, and children. Camping does provide the opportunity for families to engage in numerous activities which are foreign to urban living. A camping trip may be for a rest, but sooner or later the urge for activity will come. Thus, it is best to be equipped with the necessary games and gear. The experiences derived from such aotivities plays a big role in the growth and education of the children, as well as supplying opportunities for the family to grow together.[1]

[1] "Guide to Family Camping," Department of Parks, County of Monroe, New York, p. 38.

CHAPTER XIV

PACKING AND LEAVING THE CAMPSITE

(In discussing packing the car as well as other packing, the author will be referring to packing before leaving home also.)

The Boy Scout handbook makes a very important statement which they teach to all Scouts. "A Scout leaves a campsite in better shape than he found it, with hardly a trace to show that he camped there." This is a good rule for the camping family to follow. All trash, drainage ditches, toilets, and fires should be well taken care of before leaving.[1]

The same orderly fashion for packing after camping should be used as that which was done originally. Use of the check list is recommended. The family should check the entire campsite in case any item might have been missed. All articles should be dry and as clean as possible before loading. The load must be placed so that the distribution of weight is fairly even.[2]

Time taken to clean, fold, and pack neatly every item is worthwhile. Otherwise, the whole process may have to be repeated before storage. A wet tent should never be packed tightly for more than twenty-four hours as mildew can be very damaging.

If a luggage rack on top of the car is being used, it should be packed securely with a tarpaulin tied over the load for protection.

[1] "Breaking Camp," Scoutmaster's Handbook (United States: Boy Scouts of America, 1963), p. 212.

[2] Information Services, Canada, Family Camping, p. 52.

Most luggage racks will safely hold two hundred to three hundred pounds if the load is secured well.[3]

Before packing the car, it is a good idea to place the items on the ground next to the car. Compact packing prevents shifting and wear on equipment. Even so, periodic stops should be made while traveling to check the load—especially if a luggage rack or trailer is being used. Good packing makes for safer traveling.

[3]Miracle and Decker, Complete Book of Camping, p. 199.

CHAPTER XV

STORAGE

Boxes for tents, tarpaulins, and other equipment are the most satisfactory means of storage. A portable cupboard for dishes and canned goods can serve a two-fold purpose if it can be used for storage at home and at camp. All equipment should be stored in a dry area with the following rules kept in mind.

1. Unpack with the check list in hand, checking off each item as it comes into the house.
2. Put each item that originally came from the household back where it belongs. It should be clean and ready for use.
3. Clothes, blankets, linen, sleeping bags, and similar belongings should be either dry cleaned or washed during the first week at home.
4. The fabric items which won't be used again until the next camping trip should be stored in moth balls (provided this is the last trip of the year). Included in this group are sleeping bags and special blankets.
5. Clean and oil the camp tools.
6. The tent and tarpaulins must be completely dry before storage. Dampness will ruin even an expensive tent in the course of a winter. Set the tent up in the backyard when weather permits and give it at least a day of dry air. Clean it thoroughly, fold it carefully, and store it in a dry place.[1]

With storage completed in this manner, the camping gear will be ready for the next family trip.

[1] Information Services, Canada, op. cit., p. 53.

CHAPTER XVI

SUMMARY

Hundreds of authors spend time each year writing on some aspect of camping. A conservative New York newspaper recently referred to camping as a national "craze." Some may consider it a craze, but it is one which is definitely here to stay. This is because camping for a family can be considered an honest bargain.[1]

In our nation of numerous activities which send a family in separate directions, it is most important that the annual vacation be one of needed togetherness. This can be found through camping. The author suggests tent camping because a tent is reasonable in price, takes little room for storage, and can be transported to more remote areas. In South Dakota particularly, tent camping is most practical due to the numerous remote, virgin areas.

Successful camping is not a spontaneous event. The most important ingredient is planning. Plan for cost! Plan for time! Plan for interest! Plan for comfort![2] More hours should be spent in planning the trip than in the actual camp itself. Such preparation includes deciding as a family where the camping should take place, and then collecting and packing the necessary equipment.

An equipment check list can grow to be endless, and yet it is essential. Experienced campers stress the importance of including the

[1] Jobson, "The Complete Camper," Sports Afield, (May, 1967), p. 61.

[2] "Guide to Family Camping," Department of Parks, County of Monroe, New York, p. 45.

basics which will help a family sleep and eat well. Added to this are certain items for relaxation, camp activities, and special enjoyment. It is an absolute requirement that a check list be used before each camping trip, whether it be for only overnight, or for two weeks.

Living at camp entails work, but it is enjoyable work because it is different from normal at-home chores. However, not knowing how to pitch the tent, being inadequate in using the fuel stove, or getting wet during a midnight rain can mar a happy vacation. Having good equipment, plus knowing how and where to use it, is essential.

An accident can also ruin a vacation. Accidents do not just happen; they are caused. Camp safety with prevention is much better than cure. A little common sense can go a long way, but the camper should be prepared with calm thinking, adequate medical supplies, and proper first aid treatment when necessary. It has been impossible to discuss such treatment in this report. Instead, it is recommended that a first aid course be studied.

No camper simply "goes home." Breaking camp, packing, cleaning equipment, and then storage requires the same careful treatment that the pre-camp preparation did. Proper care and storage of equipment is directly related to how long such equipment will last. Extra time spent in carefully storing equipment is worthwhile.

The information found herein will give the basic framework for the family planning to camp. Time and experience is needed for them to become confident, successful campers.

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A BASIC GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL FAMILY TENT CAMPING

by

JAMES ROBERT HOLWERDA

B. S., Kansas State University, 1959

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Physical Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1967

The enjoyment of the great outdoors has become a tradition with the American people. Each year, more families are finding that camping is a splendid vacation for all. However, there are many individuals who hesitate to make their first camping trip. They are unfamiliar with the necessary equipment. They hesitate at the thought of sleeping outside. They wonder what foods can be prepared away from the kitchen stove, and they dread the thought of packing and unpacking.

Such people need only to talk with experienced camping families to realize that camping can be an experience of happy togetherness if there is adequate pre-camp planning. Camping is for the entire family, from the time the first map and brochure is studied until the last item of camp gear is put away in storage after the trip is over.

During the last two decades, automation has swept throughout our nation. As a result, the American people have more leisure time on their hands than ever before in history.

Camping as recreation has become one of the fastest growing leisure time activities in the United States.

The purpose of this report is to provide material that can be used as a guide in a workshop on family tent camping. This material may be used by the novice camper as well as the camper who needs additional information on family tent camping.

The sources of material for this paper were: Yankton College Library, Yankton City Library, Library of Congress, personal library, and information received from camp equipment companies and recreation

departments throughout the United States and Canada.

In order to have happy camping, there must be adequate equipment for comfortable sleeping, cozy shelter, nutritious food, and proper clothing. Frills can be added to the above mentioned necessities to fulfill the wishes of each family.

Comfortable sleeping requires a good air mattress underneath a warm sleeping bag. After an active day at camp, a good night's sleep is most important.

In addition to sleeping, every camper likes to eat. Cooking is fun in camp—sometimes done over a commercial fuel stove, and other times over an open fire. A well-organized camp cook will designate specific jobs for the various family members.

It is surprising the variety of food which can be prepared at camp if there is proper storage available in ice chests. The modern dried foods can also add to the variety. Making caramel apples, frying doughnuts, fixing popcorn, or grilling steaks are all special treats while camping. These items are easily prepared in a camp situation. However, the pre-camp planning must include the provision of stoves, fuel, ingredients, and utensils.

Camping can become a disaster, though, if one does not have the proper clothes for the children when the weather turns cold; if there is no light to see by after dark; if there are no games and quiet toys for rainy days; if there is nothing but sour milk for cereal; and if the whole family is suffering from extreme sunburn. Such disaster need never happen. Good planning is the secret. No camping trip should ever

take place without adequate planning for shelter, food, clothing, equipment, and precautions.

Selecting a campsite and establishing camp should be done while the sun is still high in the sky. It is always advisable to reach the campsite by early afternoon so that camp can be set up in an orderly fashion. All family members should perform their particular chores.

Living at camp gives the opportunity for the family to live, play, and work together at activities which all enjoy. Such activities are different from those usually participated in at home. Camp days should be enjoyed to the utmost, for it will be some time until the family again spends as much time together.

Packing for the trip home, and then proper storage of equipment until the next trip, is a task which must be done as well as the pre-camp packing and planning. With all the camp gear stored in its place, the family will spend many hours remembering the fun they had as a unit in the great outdoors.